



NEWS RELEASE

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FPPC Chair Randolph responds to senator's comments *Agency probing Johnson's complaint 'expeditiously, professionally'*

Fair Political Practices Commission Chair Liane Randolph today issued the following statement in response to comments by Sen. Ross Johnson (R-Irvine) at today's monthly commission meeting in Sacramento.

While we appreciate Sen. Johnson taking the time to appear before the commission during its "public comment" section, the commission is precluded by the Bagley-Keene open meeting law from taking any action on items that are presented to it without 10 days' public notice. Sen. Johnson's letter was provided to the commission two days before the meeting.

As we have repeatedly advised Sen. Johnson and others, the commission takes very seriously the allegations he has made about the fund-raising practices of Lt. Gov. Cruz Bustamante in the current gubernatorial recall election – allegations made originally in his complaint filed with the commission Sept. 2. In his Sept. 30 letter to the commission, he reiterated one allegation in the original complaint. We have confirmed receipt of Sen. Johnson's complaint, and we will conduct a thorough investigation.

Sen. Johnson and others have asked that we take immediate action in this matter. ALL complaints filed with the commission are taken very seriously, and our investigatory process is a fair and thorough one resulting, it is hoped, in legal conclusions based on proper investigative procedures and thoughtful analysis of the facts in each case.

There were 1,000 complaints filed with the FPPC last year alone. Our 23-member Enforcement Division -- including 10 attorneys and eight investigators -- manages a large and complex caseload expeditiously and professionally.

There are significant legal and factual issues that must be analyzed in this matter. The commission will allow neither an impending election nor allegations in the media to cut short a full investigation of the law and facts. To do otherwise would be to neglect our responsibilities as the state agency charged with upholding California's campaign finance laws with due diligence and fairness as well as careful examination of the factual and legal issues before us.

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